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The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixtieth year

Identical letters dated 26 September 2005 from the Chargé d'affaires a. i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I am writing in order to draw your attention to the most recent grievous attacks perpetrated against the citizens of Israel.

From 23 to 25 September 2005, the terrorist organization Hamas showered more than 40 Kassam artillery rockets onto the Israeli town of Sderot and elsewhere in the Negev, wounding five persons, two moderately, causing extensive damage and forcing inhabitants of the region to seek bomb shelters and reinforced rooms.

In response to the Kassam attacks and as an act of self-defence, Israel deployed forces around the Gaza Strip to prevent further assaults, targeted the terrorist infrastructure of Gaza and pursued a campaign to arrest wanted Palestinian terrorists. Consequently, Hamas issued a ceasefire, but later abrogated that call and fired additional Kassam rockets onto Israeli towns.

In a separate incident worth mentioning, some 20 Palestinians were killed on 23 September 2005 because of a Hamas explosion, when a truck rigged with munitions detonated during an armed parade in a crowded residential neighbourhood in the Gaza Strip. Hamas outrageously blamed Israel for the blast — another act of incitement and an attempt to disrupt efforts for peace at this sensitive moment in the region's history. Both the Palestinian Authority and Israel deny the veracity of this accusation.

Israel took a bold move for peace by disengaging from the Gaza Strip and areas in the northern West Bank. Although the international community has welcomed this step, Hamas returned the gesture with unwarranted violence. These attacks against the sovereign territory of the State of Israel constitute a serious terrorist aggression. In response to the terrorist attack on its people, Israel is exercising its right to self-defence, as would any other State when so attacked.

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Ever since Israel's disengagement from Gaza, the Palestinian leadership has failed to rein in terrorist organizations. The central responsibility of the Palestinian Authority is to put an end to the lawlessness within its territory, which aims to murder Israeli citizens and jeopardizes the potential for peace in the region.

The continued rocket attacks from Gaza constitute a grave violation of international humanitarian law, not only because they target innocent Israeli civilians, but also because Palestinian residents' lives are put at risk. Palestinian terrorist organizations continue the ruthless tactic of using innocent Palestinians as human shields and civilian areas as staging grounds for terrorist atrocities. Virtually all terrorist fire from Gaza emanates from crowds or residential buildings, and hundreds of explosive charges and mines are purposefully planted within civilian areas.

Only when the Palestinian Authority dismantles terrorist organizations will peace become a possibility. Such a call is echoed by the Quartet, which remarked in its statement of 20 September 2005 that it "urges the Palestinian Authority to maintain law and order and dismantle terrorist capabilities and infrastructure". This statement sharply contrasts with the Palestinian Authority's policy of negotiating with these groups.

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism launched in September 2000, which document the crimes for which the terrorists and their supporters must be held fully accountable.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 14 and 108.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a. i.